

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

Applicants have amended Claim 1 for clarity and to incorporate the limitation of canceled Claim 7. Accordingly, support for amended Claim 1 can be found in Claims 1 and 7, as originally filed presented. Applicants have also amended Claims 2-6, 8, 9, and 11-13 for clarity, and support for amended Claims 2-6, 8, 9, and 11-13 can be found in the same claims, as originally filed. Lastly, Applicants have 14-19. Support for new Claims 14-19 can be found in Claims 2-6 and 8, as originally filed, respectively.

No new matter has been added. Claims 1-6 and 8-19 are active in this application.

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

At the outset, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Feely for indicating that Claims 7, 8, and 11-13 are only objected to as being dependent from a rejected base claims and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Applicants submit that, in view of the present amendments, all of the pending claims are allowable.

The rejection of Claims 1-6 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) in view of Published U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0021393 (Ochiai et al) and the rejection of Claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) in view of Ochiai et al have both been obviated by appropriate amendment. As the Examiner will note, applicants have amended Claim 1 to incorporate the limitations of canceled Claim 7. Applicants submit that amended Claim 1 (and the claims dependent thereon) is patentable over the cited reference for the same reasons that Claim 7 was not rejected in view of this reference. Accordingly, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Application No. 10/668,361

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Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and early notification of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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